



Bob Riley
GOVERNOR

Alabama Department of
REHABILITATION SERVICES



Steve Shivers
COMMISSIONER

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Contact: Kathleen McGehee
334-293-7500 or 1-800-441-7607

Award honors ADRS partnership with AIDB

TALLADEGA – The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services became the first recipient of the Joseph Henry Johnson Legacy Award on Feb. 29 for its long partnership with the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB).

Commissioner Steve Shivers accepted the award on behalf of the department at AIDB's Anniversary Gala that celebrated AIDB's 150 years as an institute.

"It was an honor to accept this award for the good work that our staff has done in its collaboration with the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind," Shivers said. "We have the same shared mission to maximize the potential of children and adults with disabilities."

The award was named in honor of Joseph Henry Johnson, the founder and first president of AIDB. Johnson envisioned a school for the deaf after his younger brother was born deaf.

In 1858, that dream was realized after Johnson motivated his family to invest in the school. ADRS was honored for being a "valued partner in education, rehabilitation, and employment" in that dream.

The award reads, "As Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind celebrates a milestone in our history, we salute the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services – our partner in a legacy of success that is 150 years strong."

During its sesquicentennial celebration, AIDB saluted several of its partners, but ADRS was the only partner to receive a physical award, said Jessica L. Ross, AIDB's assistant director of public relations.

"Since it has been a long and mutually beneficial partnership," Ross said, "we just felt that ADRS deserved it the most."